

Message Text

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73/53

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

/060 W

----- 073494

R 281012Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 247

INFO AMCONSUL UDORN

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

CINCPAC

DIA WASHDC

CONFIDENTIAL BANGKOK 1579

CORRECTED COPY (FOR TEXT)

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT, TH

SUBJECT: ELECTION OUTCOME: SOUTH

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

FOLLOWING RECD FROM SOKHLA SENT ACTION BANGKOK DATED JANUARY 28

BEING RPTD FOR YOUR INFO.

QUOTE

CONFIDENTIAL SONGKHLA 015

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT TH

SUBJ: ELECTION OUTCOME: SOUTH

REF: SONGKHLA A-2

SUMMARY: DEMOCRATS TAKE 17 OF SOUTH'S 33 SEATS, SWEEP URBAN

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AREAS. VOTERS SHOW NEW PREFERENCE IN CHOOSING PARTY INSTEAD OF

VOTING INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATE. END SUMMARY.

1. SOUTH ELECTED MPS': DEM 17

SOC JUSTICE	5
THAI NATION	3
SOC ACTION	2
SOCIALIST	2
SOC AGRARIAN	1
DEMOCRACY	1
SOVEREIGNTY	1
SOC NATIONAL	1

2. WHILE DEMS HIT NEAR MAXIMUM ESTIMATED REFAIR, STRONG SHOWING IN SOUTH IS NOTABLE FOR DEM ECLIPSE OF BOTH NEW FORCE (WHICH FAILED TO TAKE A SEAT HERE) AND DEFEAT OF MANY EX-REGIM MPS' WITH MONEY WHO USUALLY CARRY RURAL VOTERS THEY FORMERLY OWNED. FLOODS UNDOUBTEDLY HELPED CUT DOWN VOTE IN RURAL AREAS AS PREDICTED, BUT LOW TURNOUT (30-40 PERCENT IN ENTIRE REGION) PROBABLY ALSO DUE VOTER APATHY AND FACT THAT NO SITTING GOVERNMENT WAS HUSTLING VOTES (POLICE KEPT CANVASSERS FAR AWAY FROM VOTING AREA: IN PAST THESE PEOPLE KNOWN TO JOIN VOTER INSIDE BALLOT BOOTH).

3. INTERESTING NEW FACET IS SOUTHERN SWITCH TO VOTING PARTY LINE. WHILE WE ALL OFTEN CITED THAI PREFERENCE FOR VOTING INDIVIDUALS RATHER THAN PARTY, VOTERS HERE WENT AHEAD AND SWEEPED DEM TICKET INTO SEATS OF NAKORN SRI THAMMARAT (NST), SONVKHLA, SURAT AND TRANG TOWNS. IN SONGKHLA SEVERAL VOTERS HEARD TO SAY, "I DON'T KNOW ALL THEIR NAMES, BUT I'M VOTING NUMBERS 5, 6 AND 7" (DEM SLOTS ON BALLOT).
ASSUME THIS ALSO HAPPENED IN OTHER TOWNS.

4. THAI BUDDHISTS WON SOME SEATS IN ALL MUSLIM MAJORITY PROVINCES AGAIN DEMONSTRATING THAT ETHNIC DISAFFECTION CANNOT BE ALL THAT GREAT. BELIEVE THIS ALSO INDICATES THAT RTG MILITARY OPERATIONS HAVE PUSHED SEPARATIST/BANDITS FAR ENOUGH INTO HILLS TO GUARANTEE FREEDOM FROM HARASSMENT IN MANY AREAS.

5. GAMBLING ALSO PLAYED PART IN ELECTIONS AS MANY BET FOR OR AGAINST VARIOUS CANDIDATES. SOME MERELY "PLAYED THE NUMBERS"--
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BETTING ON A NUMBER TO WIN SUGGESTED BY LOCAL ASTROLOGER OR FRIEND. WITH GAMBLING SO PERVERSIVE, THOUGH, DIFFICULT TO CALCULATE HOW IT Affected WINNERS AND LOSERS, IF AT ALL.

6. REFAIR GIVE BIO INFORMATION ON 27 OF 33 WINNERS. LIKELIHOOD OF 2 SOCIALIST WINNERS IN NST MENTIONED IN SONGKHLA 013, BUT WE WILL NEED MORE TIME FOR BIO ON THEM AS WELL AS 1 WINNER IN SURAT AND 1 IN PHATTALUNG. AVAILABLE BIO ON REMAINING TWO NEW FACES:

A. AMNOUAY SUWANKIRI (DEM). SONGKHLA NATIVE, 30 YEARS OLD, HAD BEEN WORKING IN BANGKOK AT SENI PRAMOT'S LAW OFFICE. THIRD PLACE ON DEM TICKET CARRIED HIM IN WITH SONGKHLA PARTY SWEEP. NOT WELL-KNOWN IN PROVINCE BUT WITH GOOD REPUTATION IN PROFESSIONAL CIRCLES HERE. SAID TO BE SENI'S CHOICE TO TAKE OVER PARTY IN PROVINCE WHEN KLAU LA-ONGMANI RETIRES (KLAU IS AGING BUT STILL GOT MOST VOTES IN DISTRICT TO BE ELECTED MP SEVENTH TIME).

B. AM RONG-NGEUN (ATHIBAT) IN PHATTALUNG. IN STRANGE VOTING, PHATTALUNG'S TWO SEATS WENT TO OBSCURE PARTIES (DEMOCRACY WINNING THE OTHER). FLOODS UNDOUBTEDLY PLAYED ROLE, AND PROVINCE HAS NM LARGE URBAN CENTER TO GATHER ORGANIZED MACHINE VOTE. AM RONG-NGEUN WON SEAT LAST TIME AS DEMOCRATIC FRONT CANDIDATE AND THEN SWITCHED TO EX-REGIME UTPP AFTER ELECTED. HE WAS THOUGHT TO BE OUT OF FAVOR DUE SUCH FLIP-FLOPS FROM LEFTIST PARTY TO RIGHTISTS, BUT IS WELL-KNOWN IN PROVINCE AND PULLED IT OFF. HE HAS MONEY, ALTHOUGH HIS IDEOLOGY IS SUSPECT. LEFTISTS USUALLY DO WELL IN PHATTALUNG, BUT WILL HAVE TO WAIT TO ANALYZE OUTCOME THERE FURTHER.

CASTRODALE

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